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A D D R E S S
TO THE
LOYAL LEICESTER
VOLUNTEER INFANTRY,
AT THE
PRESENTATION OF THEIR COLOURS,
IN THE
PARISH CHURCH
OF
SAINT MARTIN, *LEICESTER*,
OCTOBER, 19, 1795.
TO WHICH IS ANNEXED THE
P R A Y E R
USED ON THAT OCCASION.

By THOMAS ROBINSON, M. A.
CHAPLAIN.

L E I C E S T E R :

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P R I C E S I X P E N C E .

ADVERTISEMENT.

In compliance with the request of numerous friends, with a view likewise to obviate certain misrepresentations, but especially from a desire to gratify the wishes of the Corps, the Author consents to the publication of the following Address, in full confidence that its tendency is to promote the peace and welfare of the Community.



voured you with such a King and such a government, O pray that they may be in rich mercy preserved to you, and vow together that you will be firm and unshaken in their defence ! The Ensign is now lifted up, as a public avowal of your sentiments and determination, from which, we trust, not an Individual among you will depart. The Ensign must never be deserted, whatever extremities you may suffer for your attachment to it. If indeed " in the name of our God you have set up your banner," O flock around it and cleave to it with purpose of heart ! It is the bond of union to your Corps, and should continually remind you that you must act together as one man. You are one body, and have one common interest : Beware of every thing, which may tend to excite jealousies and animosities among you. For the division of your Corps would be worse than the rending of your Colours, which you must all consider as disgraceful.

I request you further, to bear in mind the services of the day, and to maintain a consistency of conduct. Frequently review your obligations, and offer up your devout supplications to God not only in this house, but in your retirement. You stand forth in defence of your King, your country, and your religion ; but your prayers, as

well as your courageous exertions, are wanted for this purpose. While the hands of Moses were lifted up, Israel prevailed against Amalek*. O for the same importunate intercessions on the behalf of Great Britain; and then we should not doubt of obtaining a speedy and happy deliverance from our present troubles!

You will not consider me as stepping beyond the line of my office and profession, if I add, that, as your actions will be narrowly observed, a peculiar circumspection and accuracy of conduct will be of the highest importance. This will most effectually silence your malignant accusers, and conciliate and secure to your Corps the general approbation and esteem. Without this regard to your private as well as public deportment, in all the great duties of morality and religion, you cannot be respectable, and it would be presumptuous for you to expect the divine blessing. The gay, the idle, the dissipated, the intemperate, and the profane, as they are the enemies of God, have no just claim to the character of true Patriots or loyal Subjects.

A suspicion has been insinuated, that by assuming the character of Soldiers you will divest yourselves of that, which is no less honourable, the character

* Exod. xvii, 2.

character of sober and industrious Citizens. It is feared at least, that, whilst you are required to give much of your time and thoughts to the study of the military art, you may contract a dislike or be unfitted for your usual occupations ; and thus that the duties of social and domestic life will be neglected. I say not, that you are in no danger of contracting habits and partialities, which may be inconsistent with or unfavourable to those of a kind husband, an attentive father, a diligent and virtuous tradesman. But it rests with you to prove, that the danger may be avoided, and that the fears entertained are groundless. You have entered, indeed, on a new profession, which promises great advantage to the Community, but you will still be expected to pay the strictest regard to your families, and to all your former obligations in those particular departments, to which the Providence of God hath called you.

But, whilst I am surrounded by a numerous company in different ranks of life, I feel it incumbent upon me to address a serious exhortation to all : and it seems a proper improvement of the present opportunity. "Men, Brethren, and Fathers, hearken." I charge myself and you to remember what are our engagements, not only as Citizens but as Christians ; as the Subjects, not merely of an

earthly Monarch, but of that exalted Prince, whose name is "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." He has lifted up an Ensign, under which he requires us to declare our firm and zealous attachment to Him and to his service. It is the office of his Ministers to call the attention of mankind to this Ensign, and persuade them to enroll themselves among the armies of the faithful. Jesus Christ, as "the Captain of the Lord's Host," will lead them forth to an arduous, but most honourable conflict, against all their spiritual enemies.—I ask then in his name "Who is on the Lord's side?" Can there be an Individual among us, who is not willing to avow himself a follower of the Saviour? If you make any profession of Christianity, if you acknowledge your Baptism, we must address you at least under this character. Permit me to remind you, that, when you were "received into the congregation of Christ's flock," you were "signed with the sign of the cross, in token that you should not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his Banner against sin, the world, and the devil, and to continue Christ's faithful soldiers and servants unto your life's end*." Are you sufficiently aware of these sacred engagements? Are you consistent with your avowed principles? The Banner of the Cross is displayed;

and

* Office of Baptism.

and under this we have sworn fidelity to our Captain and Commander. Convinced of the excellence of the cause, which we are called to maintain, let us not shrink, whatever difficulties or dangers may await us, but go forth with unshaken fortitude, “quit ourselves like men and be strong*.” The Banner of the Cross should also be considered as the bond of union among Christians. While therefore we earnestly contend for it with all spiritual weapons, let us move together, as a firm and well compacted army. Our object is the same; nor can we have any separate interest. Let us beware of divisions in religion: for these must weaken our strength, and give an advantage, if not a cause for triumph, to our enemies. “As good Soldiers of Jesus Christ, we must endure hardness†.” nor quit the field of battle, till the conflict be decided. The final issue will be glorious indeed to the bold and faithful Combatant; for, to such an one, under the guidance and protection of “the Captain of our salvation,” the Victory is sure, and “the crown of life” shall be adjudged.

May the God of peace and love be with you! May He direct and prosper your counsels and exertions, for the good of the community, for the advancement of true religion, and for the glory of his own name! May you continue to enjoy
your

* 1 Cor. xvi, 13.

† 2 Tim. ii, 3.

your present distinguished privileges, as Britons and as Christians ; and when, as individuals, you shall be removed from all that is dear and valuable upon earth, may you enter into a more favoured society above, where the sound of war and tumult shall be heard no more, but all will be peace, and love, and joy for ever ! Amen.

The following

P R A Y E R

was offered up at the Altar, immediately before
the Presentation of the Colours.

O Thou Almighty Sovereign, the God of glorious Majesty, who “doest according to thy will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth!” “Thou sittest in the throne, judging right;” and, amidst all the seeming confusion which prevails in this lower world, Thou art carrying on without interuption thine own wise and holy purposes. We acknowledge and adore thy Hand in those tremendous events of the present age, by which some of the mightiest kingdoms have been rent or shaken to their foundations. “We are the clay, and thou our Potter: We all are the work of thine Hand.” We presume not, therefore, to say to thee, “What doest thou? or, Why hast thou made us thus?” We are constrained to feel our entire and continual dependence upon Thee, and are taught to look up to Thee as the absolute yet righteous Arbiter between contending nations. O Lord, “undertake for us,” unworthy as we are of thy favour: in thy compassionate regard alleviate our distresses, and avert impending dangers!

Unto

Unto us, indeed, belongeth shame and “confusion of face,” for we have sinned and done exceeding wickedly. We confess for ourselves and for the people of this land, that our manifold and aggravated offences have justly exposed us to thine heaviest indignation ; and we come to deprecate that anger, which might consume us in a moment. Thou, O Lord, art gracious and merciful, long-suffering and of great goodness : Thou hast spared us though we have deserved punishment, and oftentimes hast rescued us, by a visible interposition, from threatened destruction. We acknowledge with gratitude, that even at the present awful moment, whilst thine hand is lifted up, the stroke of vengeance is mercifully delayed, and we experience the effects of thy kindness in a most abundant measure. O “ shut not up in anger thy tender mercies, which have been ever of old,” but continue them to us and our posterity !

We deplore the desolations of war, and the effusion of human blood. O Thou, that hast given the sword a commission to destroy, command that it return into the scabbard ; and, as Thou alone canst subdue the malignant affections of sinful men, we pray that Thou wouldest restore tranquillity to the nations of the earth. Deliver us, O Lord our God, from the violent assaults of foreign

foreign enemies, and from the still more tremendous consequences of discord and rebellion at home. Arise for our help, "for vain is the help of man."

May the distinguished Personage, whom Thou in thy providence hast set over these realms, continue to be the object of thy care, and his throne be established in righteousness. Direct the great Council of the nation, and over-rule all our public measures for the good of the community and for the glory of thy name. Our fleets and armies are at thy disposal: O thou God of Hosts, protect them with thine arm, and crown their exertions with success. We implore thy blessing upon this Town and neighbourhood, and upon the military force collected for its defence. May those, who here offer themselves willingly for the maintaining of good order and proper subjection to government, obtain thy favourable regard! Behold, they come to dedicate themselves and their Standards to Thee! In the name of the Lord they lift up their Banners, and renew their vows before thine Altar. O testify thy gracious acceptance of their sacrifice; and may they now go forth under the protection of thy Providence and the influence of thy Spirit! Unite them to Thyself and to each other, and give them to see their Town and their Kingdom in peace and prosperity all their days.

To

To Thee, O Father of mercies, we are indebted for distinguished privileges: O hear our fervent cries for their continuance! May our civil government, as the security of our liberties, be firmly established, and the light of the Gospel, with all our spiritual advantages, be vouchsafed to our latest posterity! We beseech thee also to illuminate with thy truth the dark places of the earth, and make all nations obedient to the sceptre of the Saviour. Pour out upon this congregation the abundance of thy heavenly Grace, that we may be consecrated to Thee, and enrolled among the armies of the faithful. Devoted to the service of our Redeemer, may we possess an undaunted courage under the Banner of His Cross, be zealous for His glory, and cease not but with our lives to "fight the good fight of faith." "O cover our heads in the day of battle," and give us the victory over all our spiritual enemies! Finally, when removed from this world of sin and misery, may we obtain an honourable admission into that holy and happy kingdom, where we may reign with Thee in thy glory, through the atoning blood and prevailing intercession of Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee, O Father; and thee, O Holy Ghost, three Persons in one God, be ascribed all might, majesty, and dominion world without end. Amen.

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